

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (MO-08) joined U.S. Reps. Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Bobby Rush in reintroducing the 340B Improvement Act, a bill to reduce hospital prescription drug expenses and enhance patient care. The resulting change would affect ten Eighth District hospitals in Missouri and 50 hospitals state-wide.

"Our efforts to control costs for patients and providers do the most good when they address the most expensive aspects of care. The 340B program enhances health care services to patients all over the country, and it is a model we should extend to more of the medicines in our hospitals as well as the patients who take them," Emerson said.

Congress established the 340B program in 1992. It ensures safety net hospitals, community health centers and other providers can best use federal resources to meet the needs of their communities by providing discounted prescription drug prices to outpatients in areas marked by underserved populations.

"In rural parts of the country, 340B can play a crucial role to expand access to health care," Emerson said. "Our hospitals have limited resources, they can be few and far between, and yet they are absolutely essential to health in our communities. They are a vital presence for the families in rural America, we have to keep that provider-patient relationship intact."